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Collegiate Seminar

Saint Mary's College of California

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COLLEGIATE SEMINAR

The faculty of the Collegiate Seminar program is drawn from all departments of the College. Since 1941, the Collegiate Seminar program has played a key role in the undergraduate academic experience at Saint Mary's College. In introducing students to the great writings that have shaped the thought and imagination of the Western world, the program aims to develop in students skills of analysis, critical thinking, interpretation and communication that will help them read and discuss significant works with increased understanding and enjoyment. More specifically, the program brings students into direct contact with the works of great minds—poets, philosophers, scientists, historians—to help them understand the ideas that have shaped the present. In addition, the Collegiate Seminar program sees these encounters as opportunities to cultivate habits of careful and disciplined reading so that students can discover for themselves the meanings embodied in any works that they may read, not just those drawn from the Great Books canon.

The Collegiate Seminar program involves all undergraduate students and faculty throughout the schools and academic departments of the College. For both students and faculty, engagement in the program transcends individual disciplines and programs of study. The program is based on a genuine sense of collegiality and reflects the basic identity of the College as an intellectual community. It offers students and faculty of different departments the opportunity to meet and to interact. Though given to different ways of seeing and thinking, students and faculty join to share a common experience—the reading and discussion of the same great texts.

Classes meet around a seminar table in small groups so that each person can participate actively in the discussion. The faculty discussion leader establishes questions about the texts in order to challenge the students to develop, through the process of discussion, defensible interpretations of their own. Discussion entails the stating of opinions and the uncovering of assumptions; students present evidence to support their position or to defend it against objections; they respond to other students' views, exposing contradictions and clarifying ambiguities. Via substantial writing assignments, students continue their inquiry into the texts, developing a thesis supported by cogent analysis based on textual evidence. Through engagement in discussion and writing, students are encouraged to read actively, to think critically, to listen well, to converse in a spirit of cooperation, and to reflect upon and refine their ideas and opinions, developing skills they can use throughout their lives. All freshmen are required to take **Seminar 20** in fall and **21** in spring (regardless of graduation plans) and are expected to complete **I22** during the sophomore year and **I23** during the junior year. All transfer students enroll in **Seminar I10** and then take **Seminar I22** and **I23** as required.

COLLEGIATE SEMINAR GOVERNING BOARD

Charles Hamaker, Ph.D., *Professor, Mathematics,*

Director of the Collegiate Seminar Program

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Michael Lisanti, M.B.A., *Lecturer*

Dana Herrera, Ph.D., *Associate Professor, Anthropology*

LEARNING OUTCOMES

As a result of their participation in the Collegiate Seminar program, students will:

- **DEVELOP** increased appreciation for great books as demonstrated by their habit of seeking out good reading.
- **GROW** in their understanding of some great ideas of humankind and of the problems and dilemmas that people have struggled with over the millennia.
- **GROW** in their intellectual curiosity.
- **GROW** in their appreciation and understanding of different ways of knowing (e.g., philosophical, literary, historical, scientific, artistic, etc.).
- **DEVELOP** simultaneously a tolerance for ambiguity and a desire for clarity, recognizing that ideas and human life are complex and not easily explainable.

C O U R S E S

20 Greek Thought

Homer, *The Odyssey*
 Aeschylus, *Agamemnon*, *Libation Bearers*, *Eumenides*
 Sophocles, *Oedipus Rex*, *Antigone*
 Thucydides, *Peloponnesian Wars*
 Aristophanes, *Lysistrata*
 Plato, *Meno*, *Apology*, *Crito*, *Phaedo*
 Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*
 Euclid, *The Elements*
 Art Selections (artworks)
 Sappho, poems
 Euripides, *Bacchae*

The reading list is current but subject to modification. From some texts, selections are read.

21 Roman, Early Christian, and Medieval Thought

Epictetus, *The Handbook*
 Lucretius, *On the Nature of the Universe*
 Virgil, *The Aeneid*
 Plutarch, *Life of Coriolanus*, *Life of Mark Anthony*
 Genesis, 1–6
 Gospel of Mark
 Art Selections
 St. Augustine, *Confessions*
 Marie De France, “Prologue,” “Guigemar,” and “Equitan”
 St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentiles*
 de Pizan, *The Book of the City of Ladies*
 Dante, *The Divine Comedy*, “The Inferno”
 Chaucer, *Canterbury Tales*, “The Wife of Bath’s Tale,” “The Merchant’s Tale”
 Rumi, selected poems
 Julian of Norwich, *Revelations of Divine Love*

Prerequisite: Seminar 20.

The reading list is current but subject to modification. From some texts selections are read.

110 Classical, Christian, and Medieval Thought

For transfer students only.

Homer, *The Odyssey*
 Aeschylus, *Agamemnon*, *Libation Bearers*, *The Eumenides*
 Thucydides, *Peloponnesian Wars*
 Plato, *Symposium*
 Sappho, poems
 Euclid, *The Elements*
 Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*
 Virgil, *The Aeneid*
 Gospel of Mark
 Epictetus, *The Handbook (The Encheiridion)*
 St. Augustine, *Confessions*
 Julian of Norwich, *Revelations of Divine Love*
 Dante, *Inferno*
 Chaucer, *Canterbury Tales*

The reading list is current but subject to modification. From some texts, selections are read.

122 Renaissance, 17th- and 18th-Century Thought

Machiavelli, *The Prince*
 Luther, *On Christian Liberty*
 Bartolome de las Casas, *Devastation of the Indies*
 Cervantes, *Don Quixote*
 Shakespeare, *King Lear*
 Adam Smith, *Wealth of Nations*
 Galileo, *The Starry Messenger*
 Descartes, *Discourse on Method*
 Hobbes, *Leviathan*
 John Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*
 Sor Juana Ines de la Cruz, “Letter to Sor Filotea De La Cruz”
 Voltaire, *Candide*
 Rousseau, *Discourse on Inequality*
 Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*
 Jane Austen, *Emma*
 Lippi, “La Vergine Col Figlio” (art)

Prerequisite: Seminar 21 or 110 and sophomore standing

The reading list is current but subject to modification. From some texts selections are read.

123 19th- and 20th-Century Thought

Newman, *The Uses of Knowledge*
 Darwin, *On the Origin of Species*
 Whitman, *Leaves of Grass*, selection
 Marx, *Wage-Labour and Capital*
 Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*
 Neruda, *Selected odes*
 Kafka, *Metamorphosis*
 Thoreau, *Walking*
 Freud, *Dissection of the Psychical Personality*
 Shaw, *Pygmalion*
 Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway*
 Picasso, “Guernica” (art)
 Unamuno, *St. Emmanuel The Good, Martyr*
 Garcia Marquez, *Love and Other Demons*
 A.M. Turing, *Computing Machinery and Intelligence*
 Malcolm X, “The Ballot or the Bullet”
 Martin Luther King, *Letter from Birmingham Jail*
 Toni Morrison, *Beloved*
 Nietzsche, *Genealogy of Morals*
 Flannery O’Connor, *A Good Man is Hard to Find*

Prerequisite: Seminar 122 and junior standing

The reading list is current but subject to modification. From some texts, selections are read.

I44 Multicultural Thought

Selected readings from 20th-century multicultural authors of the United States, especially from California. Readings continue the dialogue with authors from previous seminars, give renewed attention to questions raised in those contexts, and address contemporary issues as well.

Prerequisite: Seminar 20 or I10.

I45 World Traditions

Readings from the traditions of Asia, Africa, and the Middle East that raise basic human questions of courage, compassion, loyalty, and wisdom. These works from around the world are selected to extend the themes and ideas from both the Western Tradition sequence and the Multicultural Thought seminar to a truly global conversation. *Prerequisite:*

Seminar 20 or I10.

I90 Co-Leader Apprenticeship (.25)

A course designed for specially selected, experienced seminar students assigned to assist a faculty member as student co-leader for a specific seminar class. As co-leaders, students participate as discussion facilitators and models in a seminar they have already completed. Meetings with assigned seminar faculty by arrangement. May be repeated for credit.

I92 Introduction to Methods and Field Experience in Elementary Level Discussion Groups (.25)

Prerequisite: Seminar I22

For course description, see Liberal and Civic Studies